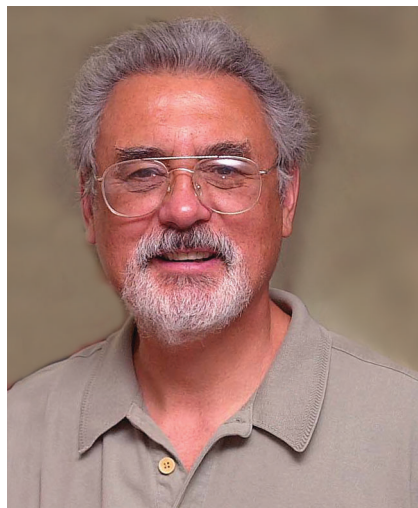




Science knows no country, because knowledge belongs to humanity, and is the torch which illuminates the world.

Louis Pasteur



After almost three decades, 109 volumes, hundreds of thousands of pages, and immeasurable hours of editing and review, *EHP* is saying goodbye to its editor-in-chief, Gary Hook. Hook is retiring from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) and his position as editor of *EHP*, but not from public service or from the endeavor to communicate science to the global community, a vision that has underpinned his leadership at the helm of this journal. In the next stage of his life's work, he travels home to his native New Zealand to commit his skills to leading the next generation of scientists being educated at Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi, a Maori university in Whakatane.

Hook was born and raised in New Zealand. He received a Ph.D. and later a D.Sc. in biochemistry from Victoria University of Wellington. Shortly after completing his postdoctoral work at the University of Wales in Cardiff, Hook traveled to the United States in 1970 to work as a visiting associate at the newly formed NIEHS in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. Little did he realize when he embarked on that journey that he was embarking too on a career that would span over 30 years and a variety of positions through which he would come to make a lasting impression on the field of environmental health science.

Hook's early work as a researcher at the NIEHS helped to establish that lung cells possess the significant ability to activate and detoxify a wide variety of chemicals that people are exposed to via inhalation in the home, workplace, and environment. This work led to a greater understanding of the function of cell specificity in the metabolism of environmental chemicals in the lung. Hook's later research revealed that chemicals such as dioxin modify the normal activities of enzymes in the lung to affect a person's susceptibility to inhaled toxicants.

From 1979 to 1992, Hook worked as a research chemist and served as head of the Biochemical Pathology Group of the Laboratory of Pulmonary Pathobiology at the NIEHS. During this period, his research on pulmonary surfactants further illuminated the ways in which surfactants are produced by lung cells, their importance in normal pulmonary function, and how they interact with chemicals and hormones. Over the course of his NIEHS career, Hook received three NIH Awards of Merit and numerous Outstanding Performance Awards.

In addition to conducting basic research, Hook began to fulfill what has become a lifelong commitment to science education by

mentoring postdoctoral students at the NIEHS, and by serving as an adjunct professor of medicine at Duke University Medical Center and as an adjunct associate professor of toxicology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Perhaps it was through his efforts to instill in budding

researchers the ideas of scientific theory coupled with the ideals of its application to human health that the foundation of a philosophy was laid that would govern Hook's later activities and arguably his greatest achievement—the expansion of *EHP*.

In 1973, Hook was asked by then-NIEHS director David Rall to become an editor of the institute's fledgling scientific journal. He agreed and, with co-editor George Lucier, set about creating what became the preeminent monograph series on environmental health science. For almost 30 years, *EHP* monographs have served the scientific community as the primary source for toxicologic information on substances ranging from lead to asbestos to benzene and topics ranging from biomarkers of cancer to indoor air to global warming. *EHP* monographs have earned the reputation of unparalleled excellence for their contribution to the body of knowledge on environmental health science.

In 1992, NIEHS director Kenneth Olden decided it was time for *EHP* to evolve into a monthly journal and supplements. He asked Hook to take the helm of the *EHP* Branch and set the course for the new publication. For the last nine years, Hook has guided *EHP* through largely uncharted waters with an unwavering vision, one that may best be summarized by a quote from Louis Pasteur, who said, "Science knows no country, because knowledge belongs to humanity, and is the torch which illuminates the world."

Hook set about making *EHP* a torch to illuminate global environmental health concerns through a broad sweep of ideas, policies, and publications. With a deep understanding that the only way to address global concerns is through the timely exchange of credible scientific information and a firm belief that ownership of such information must not be predicated on wealth and opportunity, Hook supervised the expansion of *EHP* to the Internet and implemented a program to provide free subscriptions of *EHP* to libraries and universities in developing countries. This access to cutting-edge international environmental health information is now relied on by scientists in 140 developing countries around the world, many the sites of some of the world's worst environmental problems and greatest health disparities.

One of these countries is China. In 1999, Hook was approached by the Sun-Day Centre for Chinese Enviro-Health (SDCCEH), an organization of expatriate Chinese scientists in Canada working to shed light on environmental health problems in their native country. The SDCCEH offered a unique challenge to *EHP* to provide desperately needed information to scientists, administrators, businesses, and environmentalists working to improve environmental health in China. The challenge was that not only did these groups need the information, but in order for it to have the greatest use and impact, they needed to be able to read it in Chinese. Hook seized on the opportunity and fostered the creation of a Chinese language supplement of *EHP*, the first issue of which was published and distributed in China in June of this year.

Although deeply committed to providing information to people in the developing world, Hook recognized too that information must flow not just in one direction, and that the developed world has much to learn from the observations and understanding of scientists working in their native lands. This led to his implementation of a policy of active solicitation of the best science from developing countries for publication in *EHP*, providing the

opportunity for greater recognition of the unique environmental health problems and, in many cases, solutions that may emerge from these countries.

The years of Hook's tenure at *EHP* have seen the evolution of the journal from one that was fairly narrowly focused to one that is truly comprehensive; from one whose content was enjoyed by a relative few to one that communicates to a broad spectrum, to the betterment of people around the world. The field of environmental health science owes much to Gary Hook, as do those of us who have been fortunate enough to work with him over the years in realizing his vision. Though he prepares to travel halfway around the globe, his guiding spirit will continue to fill the pages of *EHP*. Farewell and bon voyage!

Kimberly Thigpen Tart
George W. Lucier

